Town of Litchfield, NH

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Issue Date: 10/04/99

Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire Employee Handbook

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Welcome to the Town of Litchfield, NH

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the Town and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by the Town to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As the Town continues to grow, the need may arise and the Town reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. The only exception to any changes is our employment-at-will policy permitting you or the Town to end our relationship for any reason at any time.

The policies stated in this Handbook are intended as guidelines only and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Town. This Handbook should not be construed as and does not constitute a contract guaranteeing employment for any specified duration. We hope that your employment relationship with us will be long term. Please understand that no supervisor, manager or representative of the Town has authority to enter into any agreement with you for employment for any specified period of time or to make any promises or commitments contrary to the foregoing.

Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes to the handbook as they occur. Department heads are responsible for assuring that each employee has received an Employee Handbook. Department heads are also responsible for assuring that subsequent revisions and amendments to the Employee Handbook, and any additional departmental rules or regulations have been given to each employee.

Any deviation from this Employee Handbook, whether temporary or permanent, must be approved in advance, in writing by the Board of Selectmen.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The employee handbook describes important information about the Town, and I understand that I should consult with my supervisor/department head regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur, except to the Town's policy of employment-at-will. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Selectmen of the Town has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.						
EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE	DATE					

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)

101 Hiring of Town Employees

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 41:8, the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to its responsibility to manage the prudential affairs of the Town, has the responsibility and sole authority to hire and/or appoint such town employees as may be necessary, subject to budgetary constraints, unless otherwise provided by specific state statute. At its sole discretion, the Board of Selectmen may delegate a portion of its authority for hiring to a department head or Committee, namely, with respect to choosing, interviewing, and presenting applicants to the Board of Selectmen. In all instances, however, the hiring of an applicant presented to the Board of Selectmen by a department head or Committee is contingent upon confirmation by the Board of Selectmen.

102 Nature of Employment

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employment with the Town is voluntarily entered into, and the employee is free to resign at will at any time, with or without cause.

Policies set forth in this handbook are not intended to create a contract nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the Town and any of its employees. The provisions of the handbook have been developed at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen and, except for its policy of employment-at-will, may be amended or canceled by the Board of Selectmen as needed.

These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of the Board of Selectmen for the Town.

103 Employee Relations

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers and municipalities in this area. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that the Town amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

104 Equal Employment Opportunity

Effective Date: 10/04/99

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at the Town will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. The Town does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual preference, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The Town will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Town Selectmen's Office. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

105 Business Ethics and Conduct

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The successful business operation and reputation of the Town is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of the Town is dependent upon our citizens' trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to the Town, its citizens, and property owners to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

The Town will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its officials, managers and supervisors, and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with your immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with the Selectmen's Office for advice and consultation.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every Town employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

107 Employee Medical Examinations

Effective Date: 10/04/99

To help ensure that employees are able to perform their duties safely, medical and/or psychiatric examinations may be required.

After an offer has been made to an applicant entering a designated job category, a health professional of the Town's choice will perform a medical and/or psychiatric examination at the Town's expense. The offer of employment and assignment to duties is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the exam.

Current employees may be required to take medical and/or psychiatric examinations to determine fitness for duty. Such examinations will be scheduled at reasonable times and intervals and performed at the Town's expense.

Information on an employee's medical and/or psychiatric condition or history will be kept separate from other employee information and maintained confidentially. Access to this information will be limited to those who have a legitimate need to know.

108 Immigration Law Compliance

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the Town within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Selectmen's Office. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

109 Conflicts of Interest

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the Town wishes the municipality to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the Board of Selectmen for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the executive level of the Town. Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, unusual price breaks, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit either the employer, the employee, or both. Promotional plans that could be interpreted to involve unusual gain require specific executive-level approval.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of the Town's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood, marriage, common law or mutual consent. In cases where the interpretation of this policy is unclear, the Board of Selectmen, is responsible for making final decisions on a case-by-case basis.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to an officer of the Town as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the Town does business. Personal gain may also result when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Town .

No employee is allowed to enter into a contract for real estate, services, labor, materials, and/or products with and in behalf of the Town unless he/she has prevailed on the basis of written quotes and/or open competitive bidding. Likewise, no employee shall claim to act on behalf of any board, commission, committee, or department without prior authorization from said authority.

The acceptance of a gift or gratuity for personal gain or reward (except those of negligible commercial value and generally available to the general public or other Town employees without charge) is prohibited.

For further information on the Town's Conflict of Interest Policy, also refer to R.S.A. 31:39-A; and Town Warrant Article 12 - adopted March 12,1982.

110 Outside Employment

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their job with the Town. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to the Town's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If the Town determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the Town as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with the Town.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the Town for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs.

114 Disability Accommodation

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town is committed to complying fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Hiring procedures have been reviewed and provide persons with disabilities meaningful employment opportunities. Upon request, job applications are available in alternative, accessible formats, as is assistance in completing the application. Pre-employment inquiries are made only regarding an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the position.

Post-offer medical examinations are required only for those positions in which there is a bona fide job-related physical requirement. They are given to all persons entering the position only after conditional job offers. Medical records will be kept separate and confidential.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled employees, where their disability affects the performance of job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual.

Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation (or changes in compensation) as well as in job assignments, classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists. Leave of all types will be available to all employees on an equal basis.

The Town is also committed to not discriminating against any qualified employees or applicants because they are related to or associated with a person with a disability. The Town will follow any state or local law that provides individuals with disabilities greater protection than the ADA.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The Town is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

180 Employee Communications & Open Door Policy

Effective Date: 10/04/99

On occasion, situations will arise in all organizations where an employee's idea or concern may not be handled properly from the employee's point of view. In support for the regard and concern for the individual employee, the employee has the right to discuss the concern with their department head. Then, if still not satisfied, the employee may request a session with the Board of Selectmen.

Department heads are responsible for maintaining an upward flow of information regarding employee attitudes on matters including, but not limited to: job assignments, personnel progress, benefits, compensation, and working conditions. Department heads are responsible for securing final answers to any employee questions or problems. Answers must be: reasonable, responsive, and within established policies and practices.

If an answer involves an exception to an established policy, the Board of Selectmen must approve such exceptions prior to being communicated to the employee. If a case arises that involves basic policy questions or one that cannot be resolved between the employee and the department head, the department head must refer the problem to the Board of Selectmen, who will make every effort to secure a satisfactory settlement.

182 Indemnity of Town Employees

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town of Litchfield provides legal protection from claims made against Town employees, board members and volunteers while performing their job or official duties. Generally, the Town provides a lawyer and pays any damage award for any Town employee, board member or volunteer who is sued for something done while working for the Town or while performing official duties for the Town. This includes personal financial loss and expense. However, the same legal protection is not provided if a counterclaim is made as the result of the Town employee, board member or volunteer having first brought a lawsuit. In that instance, the Town employee, board member or volunteer will have to pay the Town's attorneys fees.

201 Employment Categories

Effective Date: 12/03/01

It is the intent of the Town to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so those employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time.

Each employee is designated as either NON-EXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws. NON-EXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's EXEMPT or NON-EXEMPT classification may be changed only upon written notification by the Town's Board of Selectmen.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

SALARIED employees are full-time employees who are paid on a weekly basis, and whose positions are projected out to a budgeted annualized income according to the Salary Schedule. They are considered classified as "Exempt" employees not eligible to receive overtime pay. Salaried employees are eligible for the same benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program, as are full-time employees.

TOWN OFFICIALS are elected into office by town voters, or appointed as members of town boards, commissions and committees by the Board of Selectmen. Except as noted below, town officials are not covered by this policy.

Town officials authorized to work a 40-hour workweek are paid according to the Town of Litchfield's Salary Schedule, and are considered salaried employees.

REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work the Town's full-time 40-hour schedule. Generally, they are eligible for the Town's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

REGULAR PART-TIME employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time work schedule. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some benefits sponsored by the Town (such as medical and dental insurance), subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

LIMITED PART-TIME employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and who typically work at their convenience without a specific work schedule. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation insurance), they are ineligible for all of the Town's other benefit programs.

INTRODUCTORY employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the Town is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the introductory period will be notified of their new employment classification.

TEMPORARY employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for the entire Town's other benefit programs.

ON CALL employees are those who have established an employment relationship with the Town but who are assigned to work on an intermittent and/or unpredictable basis (such as for the Fire Department). While they receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of the Town's other benefit programs.

PER DIEM employees are those who routinely work either a full-time or a part-time schedule and who accept additional compensation in lieu of participation in all but legally mandated benefit programs. The Town offers this category in limited classifications and to limited numbers of employees. Individuals participating in this program must sign waivers of their rights to participate in the benefit programs applicable to regular employees. Service in this category cannot be credited in any way toward any benefit program, even if the employee is later assigned to a benefit-eligible category. A change to or from this category can be accomplished only with the written consent of the Town.

EMERGENCY PERSONNEL are defined as any regular full-time, regular part-time or on-call employee who reports to the Road Agent, any regular full-time, regular part-time or on call employee of the Fire Department, any regular full-time, regular part-time or on-call employee of the Police Department.

202 Access to Personnel Files

Effective Date: 10/04/99

A. A file shall be maintained for all employees. The file maintained by the department head shall be considered the employee's official file and shall contain some or all of the following:

Employment Application, Internal Evaluations, Disciplinary Documentation, Payroll Records and Performance Assessments as well as any and all other Personnel Records created or maintained by the Town, pertaining to that employee.

B. Employees will be provided access to their respective personnel file in accordance with the provision of NH RSA 275:56, which reads as follows:

275:56 Employee Access to Personnel Files.

- I. Except as provided in paragraph III, every employer shall provide a reasonable opportunity for any employee who so requests to inspect such employee's personnel file and further, upon request, provide such employee with a copy of all or part of such file. An employer may charge the employee a fee reasonably related to the cost of supplying the requested documents.
- II. If, upon inspection of his personnel file, an employee disagrees with any of the information contained in such file, and the employee and employer cannot agree upon removal or correction of such information, then the employee may submit a written statement explaining his version of the information together with evidence supporting such version. Such statement shall be maintained as part of the employee's personnel file and shall be included in any transmittal of the file to a third party and shall be included in any disclosure of the contested information made to a third party.
- III. The provisions of this section shall not require the disclosure of:(a) Information in the personnel file of a requesting employee who is the subject of an investigation at the time of the request if disclosure of such information would prejudice law enforcement; or(b) information relating to a government security investigation.
- C. Employees shall have access to their file upon reasonable notification to the department head.

203 Employment Reference Checks

Effective Date: 10/04/99

To ensure that individuals who join the Town are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of the Town to check the employment references of all applicants.

The Selectmen's Office will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers. Responses to such inquiries will confirm only dates of employment, wage rates, and position(s) held. No employment data will be released without a written authorization and release signed by the individual who is the subject of the inquiry.

204 PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES

Effective Date: 10/04/99

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Town of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed notify the Selectmen's Office.

205 Introductory Period

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The introductory period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The Town uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or the Town may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

All new and rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first six months after their date of hire. Any significant absence may extend an introductory period by the length of the absence. If the department head determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended by the Board of Selectmen for a specified period.

Upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period, employees enter the "regular" employment classification.

During the introductory period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security. After becoming regular employees, they shall be eligible for other Town-provided benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of each benefits program. Employees should read the information for each specific benefits program for the details on eligibility requirements.

208 Employment Applications

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the Town's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

All applications filed with the Town shall be forwarded to the respective department heads for review.

209 Performance Evaluation

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted at the end of an employee's initial period of hire, known as the introductory period. Additional performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

An employee evaluation is the measure of an employee's actual performance, and does not mean that he/she automatically receives an increase. An employee's performance on the job is the most important factor in determining whether a step increase is to be made. Other factors to be measured are the employee's skills, attitude, loyalty, teamwork, willingness to learn and accept increasing responsibility, etc.

Appointed department heads will receive employee evaluations by the Board of Selectmen.

280 Fill-In Policy

Effective Date: 10/04/99 Revised: 04/18/05

This policy is for the use of the Fire Department.

If an on-call employee is needed to fill the position of a full-time employee, the on-call employee will be paid at the rate of Grade 8, Step 1 of the Town's Salary Schedule.

The following are the conditions that are necessary for this policy:

<u>Sickness</u> <u>Vacation</u> <u>Vacancy</u>

The Board of Selectmen will be notified prior to any fill-in requirements, if at all possible.

285 Promotion Policy

Effective Date: 10/04/99

A promotion is a regular assignment to a position requiring additional responsibilities, skill and judgment -- hence a promotion to a position in a higher salary grade. Promotions will be made only at the approval of the department heads and the Board of Selectmen.

The step position on the new grade will be the first step position, where there is at least an eight percent (8%) pay increase over the employee's former pay.

301 Employee Benefits

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Eligible employees of the Town are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Auto Mileage
- Bereavement Leave
- Dental Insurance
- Family Leave
- Holidays
- Jury Duty Leave
- Medical Insurance
- Medical Leave
- Military Leave
- Short-Term Disability
- Sick Leave Benefits
- Vacation Benefits
- Witness Duty Leave

Some benefit programs require contributions from the employee, but most are fully paid by the Town.

303 Vacation Benefits

Effective Date: 11/13/00

Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Employees in the following employment classification(s) are eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this policy:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

The amount of paid vacation time employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment as shown in the following schedule:

- Upon initial eligibility (after 1 year continuous service) the employee is entitled to 80 vacation hours each year; and accrues vacation time at a rate of 6.67 hours for each full month worked thereafter until 5 years continuous service.
- After 5 years of eligible service the employee is entitled to 120 vacation hours each year; and accrues vacation time at a rate of 10 hours for each full month worked thereafter until 15 years continuous service.
- After 15 years of eligible service the employee is entitled to 160 vacation hours each year;
 and accrues vacation time at a rate of 13.33 hours for each full month worked thereafter.

Vacation pay for regular part-time employees will be pro-rated based on the scheduled hours worked the previous year.

Limited part-time, temporary, on-call and per diem employees are not eligible to receive vacation benefits.

The length of eligible service is calculated on the basis of a "benefit year." This is the 12-month period that begins when the employee starts to earn vacation time. An employee's benefit year may be extended for any significant leave of absence except military leave of absence. Military leave has no effect on this calculation. (See individual leave of absence policies for more information.)

Once employees enter an eligible employment classification, they begin to earn paid vacation time according to the schedule. Earned vacation time is available for use upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period.

Department heads are responsible for scheduling vacations for personnel in their respective departments. To take vacation, employees should request advance approval from their department head. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements. An employee may not take more than ten (10) consecutive days vacation without specific approval of the department head and the Board of Selectmen.

Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials.

As stated above, employees are encouraged to use available paid vacation time for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits during the current calendar year. An employee will lose any vacation time, in excess of ten (10) days, which is unused at the end of the calendar year.

In the event of termination, layoff, retirement or death, the employee, or his/her beneficiary, will be paid for unused vacation time that has been earned through the last day of work.

In order to receive vacation pay in advance, employees shall submit a written request to the Town's payroll department two (2) weeks prior to the start of the week of vacation.

305 Holidays

Effective Date: 01/01/06

The Town will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees immediately upon assignment to an eligible employment classification. Eligible employee classifications include:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees
- Introductory full-time employees

The Board of Selectmen will specify the holidays at the end of the previous year. There are ten (10) specified holidays and two (2) floating days (personal days) for a total of twelve (12) during the year. Should the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Selectmen make a determination on a particular day that some Town services should be suspended due to inclement weather, that day shall be considered an additional personal day for all Town employees scheduled to work on that day, excluding Emergency Personnel. All other floating holidays or personal days must be used prior to December 26th; however, they must be scheduled and approved by the department head in advance. Total holiday hours during the course of the year is ninety-six (96) for regular full-time employees.

Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day. Regular part-time employees will be paid holiday pay if they were normally scheduled to work on the day of the week the holiday falls.

If a regular, part-time, or introductory employee is required to work on a holiday, then the employee will be paid for the time worked and be scheduled for a substitute holiday equal to time worked. To be eligible for holiday pay, employees must work the last scheduled day immediately preceding, and the first scheduled day immediately following the holiday; subject to department head authorization. If an employee is out on worker's compensation on the day that a holiday falls or is observed by the Town, then the employee will lose all entitlement to holiday pay for that day.

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the proceeding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (such as vacation or sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied.

Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

Regular part-time employees receive pay for their floating or personal days, based on the number of hours they are scheduled to work per week divided by the number of days that they are scheduled to work per week. This information is obtained from the quarterly schedule submitted by their department head.

306 Workers' Compensation Insurance

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor immediately. If more than first aid treatment is needed or if any medical bill is involved, you must also fill out a Notice of Accidental Injury form available from the Selectmen's Office. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

307 Sick Leave Benefits

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries. Eligible employee classifications consist of:

- Salaried Employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

Sick leave benefits are calculated on the basis of a "benefit year," the 12-month period that begins when the employee starts to earn sick leave benefits.

Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of one-half hour. Eligible employees may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to his or her illness, injury, the illness or injury of a spouse, child, or other blood relative or ward residing in the same household, or for the exposure to contagious disease.

SALARIED AND REGULAR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Regular full-time employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of 10 days per year (6.67) hours for every full month of service. Maximum allowable sick days to be accrued are sixty (60) days.

Regular full-time employees can request use of paid sick leave after completing a waiting period of six (6) months from the date they become eligible to accrue sick leave benefits.

REGULAR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Regular part-time employees scheduled to work 31 to 39 hours per week:

Eligible employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of five (5) days per year (.42) of a day for every full month of service. Maximum allowable sick days to be accrued are sixty (60) days.

Regular part-time employees scheduled to work 21 to 30 hours per week:

Eligible employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of three (3) days per year (.25) of a day for every full month of service . Maximum allowable sick days to be accrued are sixty (60) days.

Regular part-time employees can request use of paid sick leave after completing a waiting period of twelve (12) months from the date they become eligible to accrue sick leave benefits. The amount of hours for calculating sick days will be the scheduled amount of hours for the previous year.

LIMITED PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Employees in this category are not eligible for sick leave benefits.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisor before the scheduled start of the regularly scheduled workday on the first day of absence, if possible. Such notification must include the expected duration of the absence. The direct supervisor may be requested to call in periodically to keep the department head informed of the employee's status.

If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement must be provided verifying the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. If an employee is absent before or after a holiday, a medical certification of cause of absence may also be required. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits.

Before returning to work from a sick leave absence of 7 calendar days or more, an employee must provide a physician's verification that he or she may safely return to work.

Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as bonuses or shift differentials. As an additional condition of eligibility for sick leave benefits, an employee on an extended absence must apply for any other available compensation and benefits, such as sick days and workers' compensation.

A medical certification of cause of absence will be required of any employee who takes sick leave after being given notice of termination, or has given his/her resignation.

Unused sick leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment.

ABUSE OF THE SICK LEAVE PRIVILEGE:

Sick leave benefits are not considered a privilege, which an employee may use at his/her discretion. Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness, disability or injury of the employee or for doctor or dental appointments.

Abuse of the sick leave privilege will constitute misconduct subject to disciplinary action. Whether abuse has occurred will be determined from all of the circumstances surrounding the absence, including, but not limited to: use of sick leave unsupported by a physician's note; a discernible pattern of absences; occasions when the employee claims illness but is observed under circumstances that may prove otherwise. Chronic abuse of the sick leave privilege may be used as a basis for dismissal.

Sick leave benefits may be used by an employee to supplement up to 100% of his/her regular straight time weekly wage, by using up to the balance of his/her sick leave. If and when an employee becomes eligible to receive short-term disability (STD) benefits through the Town's policy (Section 318 on Short-Term Disability), the employee must reimburse the Town through payment of all STD checks received to the Town for all time during which the employee has also received sick leave benefits. Upon reimbursement by the employee to the Town, the Town will credit the employee's sick leave "bank" for the portion of benefits paid by STD to the employee. This policy is meant to ensure that an employee is not compensated from both the Town, and STD benefits for the same time taken on sick leave.

309 Bereavement Leave

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately.

Up to 3 days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to eligible employees in the following classification(s):

- Introductory full-time employees
- Introductory part-time employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or shift differentials.

Bereavement leave will normally be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with their supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

The Town defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, parent, grandparent, child, sibling; the employee's spouse's parent, child, or sibling. Additional time, at the discretion of the department head, may be granted to attend the funeral of another relative or of a Town employee.

311 Jury Duty

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. Employees who have completed a minimum of 10 calendar days of service in an eligible classification may request up to two weeks of paid jury duty leave, not to exceed a limit of 30 days total over any 1 year period.

Jury duty pay will be calculated on the employee's base pay rate times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on the day of absence. Any payment the employee receives from the court for jury duty service must be submitted to the town in order to be eligible for jury duty pay. The town will reimburse the employee for mileage.

Employee classifications that qualify for paid jury duty leave are:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

If employees are required to serve jury duty beyond the period of paid jury duty leave, they may use any available paid time off, excluding sick leave benefits (for example, vacation benefits) or may request an unpaid jury duty leave of absence.

Employees must show the jury duty summons to their supervisor as soon as possible. The supervisor shall make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Either the Town or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in the Town's judgment, the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties.

The Town will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the jury duty absence.

Benefit accruals such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits will be suspended during unpaid jury duty leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

312 Witness Duty

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town encourages employees to appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so.

If employees have been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as witnesses by the Town or duties related to employment, they will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.

Employees will be granted unpaid time off to appear in court as a witness when subpoenaed by a party other than the Town for testimony not related to duties of employment. Employees are free to use available paid leave, excluding sick leave benefits (such as vacation, and personal leave) to receive compensation for the period of this absence.

The subpoena should be shown to the employee's supervisor immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

313 Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the Town's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility.

Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the Town's group rates plus an administration fee. The Town provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the Town's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

316 Medical & Dental Insurance

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town health insurance plan provides employees and their dependents access to medical and dental insurance benefits. Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to participate in the health insurance plan:

- * Salaried employees
- * Regular full-time employees
- * Regular part-time employees
- * Introductory employees

Eligible employees may participate in the health insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the Town and the insurance carrier.

Salaried, Regular and Introductory full-time employees are eligible for group medical and dental insurance upon completion of thirty (30) days continuous service, or as soon as the plan allows enrollment after the 30 day period. The Town will pay 100% of the premium cost of both the medical and dental insurance plans for the employee. The Town will also pay 80% of the premium cost of both the medical and dental insurance plans for both the 2-person plan and the family plan.

Regular part-time employees (scheduled to work 21 hours per week or more) are also eligible for group medical and dental insurance upon completion of thirty (30) days continuous service, or as soon as the plan allows enrollment after the 30 day period. The Town will pay 50% of the premium cost of both the medical and dental insurance plans for the employee, 2-person plan and the family insurance plans. Scheduled hours will be reviewed quarterly to check for eligibility.

During a medical leave of absence (whether caused by illness or accident), and which is not covered by Workers' Compensation, the Town will pay 100% of the premium cost of both the medical and dental insurance plans for the employee only up to three (3) months. See Policy Number 601 for further details and clarification for regular full-time and regular part-time employees.

In cases of leave for other reasons, the employee will be required to pay all insurance premiums no later than the last week of each month preceding the coverage period, and such coverage may be extended if the employee has dependent coverage.

A change in employment classification that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify an employee for benefits continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). Refer to the Benefits Continuation (COBRA) policy for more information.

Details of the health insurance plan are described in the Summary Plan Description (SPD). An SPD and information on cost of coverage will be provided in advance of enrollment to eligible employees. Contact the Selectmen's Office for more information about health insurance benefits.

318 Short-Term Disability

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides a short-term disability (STD) benefits plan to eligible employees who are unable to work because of a qualifying disability due to an injury or illness. Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to participate in the STD plan:

- Salaried employees
- Introductory full-time employees
- Regular full-time employees

Eligible employees may participate in the STD plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the Town and the insurance carrier.

Disabilities arising from pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness are treated the same as any other illness that prevents an employee from working. Disabilities covered by workers' compensation are excluded from STD coverage.

Details of the STD benefits plan including benefit amounts, when they are payable, and limitations, restrictions, and other exclusions are described in the Summary Plan Description provided to eligible employees. Contact the Selectmen's Office for more information about STD benefits.

If and when an employee becomes eligible to receive short-term disability (STD) benefits, for any period of time during which the employee is also receiving sick leave benefits from the Town through the Town's sick leave policy (See Section 307 Sick Leave Benefits), the employee must reimburse the Town through payment of the STD checks to the Town. Upon reimbursement by the employee to the Town, the Town will credit the employee's sick leave "bank" for the portion of benefits paid by STD to the employee. This policy is meant to ensure that an employee is not compensated from both the Town (by payment of sick leave benefits) and STD benefits for the same time taken.

320 Temporary Disability of Department Head

Effective Date: 04/26/04

Rescinded: 06/28/04 Effective Date: 06/28/04

In the event that a Department Head is temporarily disabled, that Department Head's immediate subordinate may be temporarily assigned the duties of the Department Head by the Board of Selectmen unless prohibited by statute. If the Department Head is temporarily disabled for more than thirty (30) working days, the Board of Selectmen may, in its discretion, temporarily increase the subordinate's compensation. The temporary increase in compensation will begin no earlier than the thirty-first (31st) working day of the Department Head's disability and will end when the Department Head returns from his/her disability or a new Department Head is named.

The purpose of the temporary increase is to compensate the subordinate for the additional responsibility of performing the Department Head's duties. The temporary increase in compensation may be in any amount the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate to carry out that purpose.

401 Timekeeping

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal and state laws require the Town to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Nonexempt employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. Overtime work must always be approved before it is performed.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is the employees' responsibility to sign their time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The supervisor will review and then initial the time record before submitting it for payroll processing. In addition, if corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record.

403 Paydays

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees are paid weekly every Thursday. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a weekend or holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

If a regular payday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee may receive his or her earned wages before departing for vacation if a written request is submitted at least two weeks prior to departing for vacation.

405 Employment Termination

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Termination of employment occurs for a variety of reasons. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee.
- Discharge involuntary employment termination initiated by the Town for any reason..
- Layoff involuntary employment termination initiated by the Town for non-disciplinary reasons.
- Retirement voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the Town.

Since employment with the Town is based on mutual consent, both the employee and the Town have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner. All accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee so chooses. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance.

480 Compensation Plan

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Compensation for all employees (not covered by contract), and elected officials whose salary is not established by statute, will be subject to the Salary Schedule of the Town of Litchfield. In order to remain equitable and competitive with other employers and municipalities in the area for similar types of positions held within the Town, the Salary Schedule may be adjusted from time to time by the Town's Board of Selectmen.

After an employee completes the introductory period, the department head has the responsibility of moving the employee from Step 1 of the Salary Schedule to Step 2. However, if the department head determines that the employee's introductory period should be extended, the department head will notify the Board of Selectmen as to the reasoning behind, and circumstances surrounding this determination.

481 Salary Planning

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Salary Planning: The major purposes of salary planning are:

- 1. To ensure that all employees receive management review of their performance and salaries on a systematic basis;
- 2. To provide a means of ensuring consistency in pay practices across all departments;
- 3. To provide a means of controlling anticipated expenditures.

Salary Planning is conducted on an annual basis, during the budget review cycle. Department heads will receive a new salary schedule with the pay increases (if any) prior to their budget reviews.

The salary schedule and any step increases of employees will be used to determine the salary budget of the department.

501 Safety

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, where appropriate, remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify their department head or the appropriate supervisor. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

502 Work Schedules

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Work schedules for employees vary from department to department or function to function.

Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

503 SEVERE WEATHER

Effective Date: 12/03/01

The Chairman of the Board of Selectmen is responsible for determining if, for the safety and welfare of the Town employees, some Town services will be suspended or delayed due to inclement weather. If the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen is not available to make the determination, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Selectmen shall make said determination, after using reasonable efforts to contact the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. Some Town functions must remain in operation regardless of weather conditions including police, fire and snow removal personnel and therefore this section of the personnel policy and the provisions contained herein do not apply to Emergency Personnel as defined in Section 201 of the Town's Personnel Policy.

Once a determination has been made that some Town services will be suspended or delayed due to inclement weather, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or the Vice Chairman of the Board of Selectmen will be responsible for providing appropriate announcements to the media. On a yearly basis the Town will issue a notice to all employees instructing them which media outlet(s) will publish the cancellation or delayed opening notice.

Supervisors should receive authorization from the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen or Vice-Chairman of the Board of Selectmen before directing employees not to report for work or sending employees home early. Unless directed otherwise, employees are expected to report to work as scheduled. Each employee shall use his/her own discretion in determining if travel is safe. An employee who reasonably determines that travel would be unsafe due to inclement weather will not be subject to discipline for not reporting to work. Supervisors are expected to honor the reasonable requests of employees to arrive late or to leave early because of inclement weather. Employees are expected to make a reasonable effort to notify their supervisors if they cannot report or will report late.

If the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Board of Selectmen determines that some Town services shall be suspended due to inclement weather, employees that do not report to work as scheduled will be paid for that day, as it will be considered an additional floating day (personal day). Otherwise, employees who are absent from work because of inclement weather normally must use available vacation, available holidays or available personal days.

505 Smoking Effective Date: 10/04/99

In keeping with the Town's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace.

This policy applies equally to all employees, citizens, residents, property owners, and visitors.

507 Overtime

Effective Date: 10/04/99

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be scheduled to work overtime hours. When possible, advance notification of these mandatory assignments will be provided. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization. Casual or self-elected overtime without department head approval is strictly prohibited. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Currently, overtime wages are paid for all hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours per day, or forty (40) hours per week.

Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. However, vacation time is to be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

Overtime is the exception and not the rule. Any continuous overtime will be reported to the Board of Selectmen.

508 Use of Equipment and Vehicles

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Town equipment and vehicles are reserved exclusively for Town business and operations purposes. Employees are not allowed to use any Town property, vehicle, equipment, etc. for personal purposes. However, this policy is not intended to prohibit an employee from requesting, using or permitting their use where it is the general practice to make available to the public at large or provided for the use by employees in the conduct of official business.

Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others.

The supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

512 Business Travel Expenses

Effective Date: 02/12/07

The Town will reimburse employees for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location. All business travel must be approved in advance by the department head. In the event that expected travel expenses should exceed \$250, advance approval must be obtained from the Board of Selectmen.

Employees whose travel plans have been approved are responsible for making their own travel arrangements.

When approved, the actual costs of travel, meals, lodging, and other expenses directly related to accomplishing business travel objectives will be reimbursed by the Town. Employees are expected to limit expenses to reasonable amounts.

Expenses that generally will be reimbursed include the following:

- Mileage costs at \$.485 per mile for use of personal cars.
- Cost of meals, no more lavish than would be eaten at the employee's own expense.
- Tips not exceeding 15% of the total cost of a meal or 10% of a taxi fare.
- Charges for telephone calls, fax, and similar services required for business purposes only.

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor. Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by the Town may not be used for personal use without prior approval.

When travel is completed, employees should submit completed travel expense reports within 7 days. Receipts for all individual expenses should accompany reports.

Employees should contact their supervisor for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

522 Workplace Conduct & Violence Prevention

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, the Town has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a customer, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's gender, race, age, sexual preference or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by customers, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, you should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your workstation, do not try to intercede or see what is happening.

The Town will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the Town may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The Town encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors, department heads or the Board of Selectmen before the situation escalates into potential violence. The Town is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

601 Medical Leave

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides medical leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who are temporarily unable to work due to a serious health condition or disability. For purposes of this policy, serious health conditions or disabilities include inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; continuing treatment by a health care provider; and temporary disabilities associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions.

Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to request medical leave as described in this policy:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

Eligible employees may request medical leave only after having completed one (1) year of service. Exceptions to the service requirement will be considered to accommodate disabilities. Eligible employees should make requests for medical leave to their supervisors at least 30 days in advance of foreseeable events and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events.

A health care provider's statement must be submitted verifying the need for medical leave and its beginning and expected ending dates. Any changes in this information should be promptly reported to the Town. Employees returning from medical leave must submit a health care provider's verification of their fitness to return to work.

Eligible employees are normally granted leave for the period of the disability, up to a maximum of 12 weeks within any 12-month period. Any combination of medical leave and family leave may not exceed this maximum limit. If the initial period of approved absence proves insufficient, consideration will be given to a request for an extension. Employees will be required to first use any accrued paid leave time before taking unpaid medical leave.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries are eligible for a medical leave of absence for the period of disability in accordance with all applicable laws covering occupational disabilities.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, the Town will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full period of the approved medical leave.

Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

So that an employee's return to work can be properly scheduled, an employee on medical leave is requested to provide the Town with at least two weeks advance notice of the date the employee intends to return to work. When a medical leave ends, the employee will be reinstated to the same position, if it is available, or to an equivalent position for which the employee is qualified.

If an employee fails to return to work on the agreed upon return date, the Town will assume that the employee has resigned.

602 Family Leave

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides family leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill family obligations relating directly to childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child; or to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition. A serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Employees in the following employment classifications are eligible to request family leave as described in this policy:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

Eligible employees may request family leave only after having completed one (1) year or more of continuous service. Eligible employees should make requests for family leave to their supervisor at least 30 days in advance of foreseeable events and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events.

Such a leave must be recommended in writing by the department head and approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Employees requesting family leave related to the serious health condition of a child, spouse, or parent may be required to submit a health care provider's statement verifying the need for a family leave to provide care, its beginning and expected ending dates, and the estimated time required.

Eligible employees may request up to a maximum of 12 weeks of family leave within any 12 month period. Any combination of family leave and medical leave may not exceed this maximum limit. If this initial period of absence proves insufficient, consideration will be given to a written request to the Board of Selectmen for a single extension of no more than 30 calendar days. Employees will be required to first use any accrued paid leave time before taking unpaid family leave. Married employee couples may be restricted to a combined total of 12 weeks leave within any 12 month period for childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child; or to care for a parent with a serious health condition.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, the Town will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full period of the approved family leave.

Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

So that an employee's return to work can be properly scheduled, an employee on family leave is requested to provide the Town with at least two weeks advance notice of the date the employee intends to return to work. When a family leave ends, the employee will be reinstated to the same position, if it is available, or to an equivalent position for which the employee is qualified.

If an employee fails to return to work on the agreed upon return date, the Town will assume that the employee has resigned.

603 Personal Leave

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town provides leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill personal obligations. Employees in the following employment classification(s) are eligible to request personal leave as described in this policy:

- Salaried employees
- Regular full-time employees
- Regular part-time employees

As soon as eligible employees become aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, they should request a leave from their supervisor.

Personal leave may be granted for a period of up to 60 calendar days within a five-year period. If this initial period of absence proves insufficient, consideration will be given to a written request for a single extension of no more than 30 calendar days. With the supervisor's approval, an employee may take any available vacation leave as part of the approved period of leave.

Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated work load requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, the Town will provide health insurance benefits *until the* end of the month in which the approved personal leave begins. At that time, employees will become responsible for the full costs of these benefits if they wish coverage to continue. When the employee returns from personal leave, the Town according to the applicable laws will again provide benefits .

Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.

When a personal leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. However, the Town cannot guarantee reinstatement in all cases.

If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, the Town will assume the employee has resigned.

605 Military Leave

Effective Date: 10/04/99

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable.

Employees will receive partial pay for two-week training assignments and shorter absences. Upon presentation of satisfactory military pay verification data, employees will be paid the difference between their normal base compensation and the pay (excluding expense pay) received while on military duty.

The portion of any military leaves of absence in excess of two weeks will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available vacation or unused holiday pay for the absence.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available as required by USERRA based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible.

Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the employee's return to active employment.

Employees on military leave for up to 30 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws.

Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed or a comparable one depending on the length of military service in accordance with USERRA. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service.

Contact the Selectmen's Office for more information or questions about military leave.

607 Pregnancy-Related Absences

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town will not discriminate against any employee who requests an excused absence for medical disabilities associated with pregnancy. Such leave requests will be evaluated according to the medical leave policy provisions outlined in this handbook and all applicable federal and state laws.

Requests for time off associated with pregnancy and/or childbirth, such as bonding and child care, not related to medical disabilities for those conditions will be considered in the same manner as other requests for unpaid family or personal leave.

701 Employee Conduct and Work Rules

Effective Date: 10/04/99

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the Town expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Willful misuse, misappropriation, destruction, theft, inappropriate removal, possession, or conversion to personal use of Town property, materials or equipment
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol, or illegal drugs or narcotics in the workplace, while on duty, reporting for duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Disorderly conduct, such as fighting or threatening violence in the workplace, whether on- or off-duty
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Continuous uncivil or discourteous attitudes toward the public or fellow employees
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Town-owned or Town residentowned property
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Acts of insubordination or other disrespectful conduct toward a supervisor, department head, or other town official
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Discrimination on the basis of gender, age, color, national origin or religion
- Violations as a result of conflicts of interest, including acceptance of a gift or gratuity in violation of Town policy
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Frequent, habitual or excessive tardiness, absenteeism or any unauthorized absence without notice
- Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday
- Unauthorized disclosure of Town business "secrets" or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- Solicitation, advertising, or selling any items or services on Town property or during work hours.

702 Drug and Alcohol Use

Effective Date: 10/04/99

It is the Town's desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While on the Town premises and while conducting business-related activities off the Town premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment, and/or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependency or abuse are encouraged to discuss these matters with their supervisor or the Selectmen's Office to receive assistance or referrals to appropriate resources in the community.

Employees with drug or alcohol problems that have not resulted in, and are not the immediate subject of, disciplinary action may request approval to take unpaid time off to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program through the Town's health insurance benefit coverage. Leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from use of the problem substance; abides by all the Town policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and if granting the leave will not cause the Town any undue hardship.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with their supervisor or the Selectmen's Office without fear of reprisal.

703 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, and is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who wants to report an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to his or her supervisor and or department head. If the supervisor and or department head is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately contact the Selectmen's Office or any other member of management. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly advise the Selectmen's Office or any member of management. An investigation of the allegations will then be undertaken. Your complaint will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. If the Town determines that an employee is guilty of harassing another employee, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee, up to and including termination of employment.

The Town prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation. However, if, after investigating any complaint of harassment or unlawful discrimination, the Town determines that the complaint is not bona fide and was not made in good faith or that an employee has provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint or who gave the false information.

704 Attendance and Punctuality

Effective Date: 10/04/99

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, the Town expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on the Town. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

706 Return of Property

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees are responsible for all the Town property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees on or before their last day of work must return all Town property. The Town may take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

708 Resignation Effective Date: 10/04/99

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the Town. Although advance notice is not required, the Town requests the courtesy of at least two (2) week's written resignation notice from all employees.

710 Security Inspections

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, unauthorized firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, the Town prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises. The Town requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of the Town.

712 Solicitation

Effective Date: 10/04/99

In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by the Town may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose. The Town recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit, advertise or sell any items or services on Town property or during work hours, nor may they distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks, or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.)

Examples of impermissible forms of solicitation include:

- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for religious groups
- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for political groups
- The sale of goods, services, or subscriptions outside the scope of official organization business
- The circulation of petitions
- The distribution of literature not approved by the employer
- The solicitation of memberships, fees, or dues

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on town bulletin boards is restricted. These bulletin boards display important information, and employees should consult them frequently for:

- Affirmative Action statement
- Employee announcements
- Internal memoranda
- Job openings
- Organization announcements
- Payday notice
- Workers' compensation insurance information
- State disability insurance/unemployment insurance information

If employees have a message of interest to the workplace, they may submit it to the Selectmen's Office for approval. All approved messages will be posted by the Selectmen's Office.

718 Problem Resolution

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The Town is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from the Town's supervisors and department heads.

The Town strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. Supervisors, department heads, and employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. Employees are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with the Town in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when employees believe that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps. The employee may discontinue the procedure at any step.

- A. Step 1: Employee presents problems, suggestions or concerns in writing to his/her immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes that it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee may present problems, suggestions or concerns to his/her department head. The supervisor or department head will hold a meeting within five (5) business days with employee to discuss problems, suggestions or concerns. The supervisor or department head shall create a record of that discussion. The supervisor or department head shall, when necessary, consult with appropriate management and render a decision no later than ten (10) business days, following the receipt of the employee's written description of the problems, suggestions or concerns.
- B. Step 2: If the Step 1 decision is unsatisfactory to the employee, he/she may file a complaint with the department head within seven (7) business days of the employee's receipt of the Step 1 decision. This complaint must specify the person allegedly causing the complaint; the time and place of the action being grieved; the nature of the complaint; the specific injury or loss that is claimed; and the remedies sought. The department head shall hold a hearing within seven (7) business days of receipt of this written complaint, excluding the day that the complaint was received, and shall render a decision no later than fourteen (14) business days following receipt of the written complaint.
- C. Step 3: If the employee is not satisfied with the Step 2 decision, an appeal may be filed with the Board of Selectmen in writing within seven (7) business days of receipt of the Step 2 decision. All documentation presented at Step 2, along with the Step 2 decision, shall accompany the written appeal to the Board of Selectmen. If the employee wants a hearing before the Board of Selectmen on said complaint, a request for such hearing must be contained in the written request for appeal. The

Board of Selectmen shall render their decision no later than fifteen (15 business days following receipt of the written appeal, excluding the day that the appeal is received. The Board of Selectmen has the right to deny or approve any request for a hearing.

Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussion of mutual problems can employees and management develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment, and helps to ensure everyone's job security.

780 Suspension

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Department heads or the Board of Selectmen have the authority to suspend, without pay, an employee. In the event of a suspension by the department head, the department head will notify the Board of Selectmen of the suspension in writing, within seventy-two (72) hours.

A suspended employee may request in writing within five (5) business days of the suspension that a hearing be held before the Board of Selectmen. Upon this request, a hearing will be scheduled with the Board of Selectmen within fourteen (14) business days from the date the request is received.

800 Life-Threatening Illnesses in the Workplace

Effective Date: 10/04/99

Employees with life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, often wish to continue their normal pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition. The Town supports these endeavors as long as employees are able to meet acceptable performance standards.

Medical information on individual employees is treated confidentially. The Town will take reasonable precautions to protect such information from inappropriate disclosure. Managers and other employees have a responsibility to respect and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information. Anyone inappropriately disclosing such information is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees with questions or concerns about life-threatening illnesses are encouraged to contact the Town Selectmen's Office for information and referral to appropriate services and resources.

801 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Effective Date: 10/04/99

The town maintains an electronic mail system. This system is provided by the town to assist in the conduct of business within the Town of Litchfield. All electronic and telephone communications, including, but not limited to, facsimiles, email, Internet communications, voice mail, etc., and all information transmitted by, received from, or stored in town systems, are the property of the Town of Litchfield, and as such, are to be used solely for job-related purposes. All pass codes are the property of the town. No employee may use a pass code that has not been issued to that employee or is unknown to town management.

To protect the network from possible virus infections, personal software cannot be copied, installed, or downloaded on town computer equipment, unless authorized by department head and installed by proper computer personnel. Installation or downloading of software not licensed for use by the town onto town computer equipment is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to games, fonts, utilities, CD-ROM applications and all software applications.

The use of any software or business equipment for personal purposes is strictly forbidden, unless the express written permission of the department head is obtained by the employee. Town policies regarding harassment, courtesy and solicitation apply to the use of electronic communications systems. The electronic mail system is not to be used to create or send any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those considered offensive, are any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.

The electronic mail system shall not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or information not relevant to the operation of the municipality, or similar materials without prior authorization.

The department head reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail systems for any purpose. Any employee who violates this policy or uses the electronic mail system for improper purposes shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

INTERNET CODE OF CONDUCT

Access to the Internet has been provided to staff members for the benefit of the town and its residents. It allows employees to connect to information resources around the world. Every staff member has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the town's public image, and to use the Internet in a productive manner. To ensure that all employees are responsible, productive Internet users and are protecting the town's public image, the following guidelines have been established for using the Internet.

Acceptable Uses of the Internet

Employees accessing the Internet are representing the town. All communications should be for professional reasons. Employees are responsible for seeing that the Internet is used in an

effective, ethical and lawful manner. Internet relay chat channels may be used to conduct official town business, or to gain technical or analytical advice. Databases may be accessed for information as needed. E-mail may be used for municipal contacts.

Unacceptable use of the Internet

The Internet should not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. Solicitation of non-town business, or any use of the Internet for personal gain is strictly prohibited. Use of the Internet must not disrupt the operation of the town network or the networks of other users, and must not interfere with employee productivity.

Communications

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that they place or send over the Internet. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages are prohibited. All messages communicated on the Internet should have the maker's name attached. No messages shall be transmitted under an assumed name. Users may not attempt to obscure the origin of any message. Information published on the Internet should not violate or infringe upon the rights of others. No abusive, profane, or offensive language will be transmitted by town employees.

Copyright Issue

Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than the Town may not be transmitted by staff members on the Internet. Users are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, add or delete information or programs belonging to other users unless given express permission to do so by the owner.

Security

All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet are the property of the town. The department head reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. All communications including text and images can be disclosed to law enforcement or appropriate town officials without prior consent of the sender or the receiver.

Harassment

Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, age, gender or sexual orientation will be transmitted.

Violations

Violations of any guidelines listed above may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. If necessary, the town will advise appropriate legal officials of any violations of State or Federal Law.